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ABSTRACT

The guide, intended as working materials for a teacher workshop, introduces second language teachers to principles and practices of student dialogue journal writing. It begins by outlining nine principles to follow concerning second language writing at all instructional levels. It then offers two sample journal entries with spaces for teachers to practice responding, and suggests guidelines and considerations for teacher response. Six useful in-class writing activities are described: whole-class compositions; a timed writing exercise; note-taking; penpals; journal partners; and preparing questionnaires. Suggestions are given for modifying other class activities to include a writing component. Subsequent sections present general considerations for designing and implementing writing activities, an essay evaluation activity for teachers, principles for testing writing skills, notes on making the distinction between simple writing and composition, grading criteria for compositions in a beginning language courses and a college-level composition course, and recommendations for planning individual student conferences. A brief annotated list of references is included. All examples of student writing and college-level evaluation criteria are in Spanish. (MSE)

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SECOND LANGUAGE WRITING

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WORKSHOP SERIES

FL 020 761

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SOME PRINCIPLES ABOUT SECOND LANGUAGE WRITING AT ALL LEVELS OF INSTRUCTION

1. Writing should not be kept separate from other language arts activities - it should be incorporated into as many other activities as possible and as often as possible. Class time should regularly be devoted to writing.

2. Writing is a skill which can be taught and developed, and is effectively done through a variety of activities.

3. Writing should always have a communicative purpose - writing should never be done simply to practice writing.

4. Writing activities in the classroom should be accomplished in a "workshop" atmosphere. A workshop (as opposed to a traditional classroom setting) is active, dynamic, collaborative and cooperative.

5. Writing should be shared in the classroom creating a "discourse community". Writing can often be a group effort - it needn't always occur in silent isolation.

6. Your students should also have access to your writing in terms of written responses to their writing.

7. Writing doesn't always have to be graded, but you or another student should *always* read and respond to other students' writing.

8. Writing should be evaluated by students' peers on occasion.

9. No special technology is needed for students to write in the classroom, although possibilities for incorporating electronic mail networks and word processors into a writing program are limitless.

THE DIALOGUE JOURNAL

TO THE STUDENT:

You are beginning a program that will help you improve your ability to write in Spanish. You learn to write by writing. You will be keeping a special notebook in which to write your Weekly Journals. A journal is like a diary; it is a record of your activities, memories, experiences, feelings, observations, reactions, etc. In other words, you write about whatever *you want to write about.* Keeping a journal will help sharpen your powers of observation and develop an awareness of problems, often helping to resolve them, or at least put them in perspective. In this way, your mind is clearer for studies and other interests.

You are often reflective in this type of writing, and the pressure-free situation of knowing you are writing only for yourself allows more ideas to surface. Since this writing is not judged, it helps rid of "the fear of having nothing to say." When you are writing for other purposes and think you have no ideas or have a writer's block, use your journal as a starting place.

You will share your journal entries with your instructor. In this way, your instructor gets to know you, your academic and professional goals, and your writing needs. Your goal in writing the journal is to get your ideas down in writing; your grammar and spelling, though important, will not be evaluated.

Your journal entries will never be graded; you will be given a grade of credit/no credit. You will be expected to write two entries per week - one paragraph each. Your instructor will often respond to your writing, sometimes encouraging you to discuss an issue in more detail or to clarify your remarks. At no time will anything you write in your journal be shared with anyone else without your permission.

TIPS FOR JOURNAL WRITING:

Write in Spanish - ***NEVER*** translate from English.
Write about your feelings and reactions; lists of the week's sports scores or favorite songs by Marky Mark are not reactions, and therefore are not acceptable.
Write briefly, 5 to 10 minutes at a time, unless inspired to do more.

SAMPLE STUDENT JOURNALS

Principle consideration: A journal is ***NOT*** a composition - you *evaluate* a composition and you read and *respond* to a journal.

Sample journal 1 (2nd semester)

Yo pienso que el estudiando de español no estan una obligación pero los americanos tienen que guerer estudiar español. Los beneficios que estudio español es una mejor entendimiento para los hispanicos y sus cultura. El estudia que lenguas extranjeros en general es una idea muy buena, pero especialmente español, porque los muchos hispanicos in esta país. Es muy mal que turistas para los EE UU espara poder a hablar ingles in otros paises que ellos visitan.

Possible responses...

Sample journal 2 (3rd semester)

Pienso que la jubilación de 65 o 70 años es una malgastaria y una forma de discriminación si las personas productivas que no la quieren deben que jubilar. Cada año, perdemos muchas personas mayores con mucha experencia en sus ámbitos. Es una perdida de nos, pero mas importante, es una perdida grande por los mayores.

Es un facto que en las empresas grandes como IBM, la vida de los executivos que deben que jubilar es muy corto---en el promedio solamente diez y ocho meses. ¡Es todo! Es muy corto, ¿no? Pero no es una sorpresa porque estas personas no tienen un razón para levantarse en la mañana. Detras de años de trabajo, es imposible para adaptar una vida sin estes actividades.

Si una person tiene la capacidad para hacer su trabajo, y si esta persona quiere trabajar, pienso que es bastante. Pienso que la asistencia pública para los mayores es un chistoso. No es bastante para vivir bien. Si una persona puede ganar su propia dinero sin esta asistencia, es muy buena para esta persona y la país, también. Personalmente, ¡no quiero que jubiliar! Digo que la menos haces, la menos haces. Es importante ser ocupado para el aprecio de si mismo. Todas las personas necesitan sentir importante. ¡Es muy difícil cuando no haces nada!

Possible responses:

To the instructor: How to Read and Respond to Journals

☹ **DO NOT CORRECT SPELLING OR GRAMMAR.**

☺ Try to make your comments positive and unbiased. "I disagree; I think abortion should be legal" may not encourage the student to write more. "Why do you feel that way?" may encourage further writing. If the writing is incomprehensible, simply tell the student. At that point, you may choose to give the journal a "no credit" or, depending on the situation, have the student rewrite it. Your response doesn't need to be lengthy; write comments that might encourage the student to explore a topic in greater depth or a new topic.

☺ Answer the questions that students ask you in their journals. Unanswered questions show the students that either you don't read their writing and/or you don't care. Often, students will later confront you if you fail to respond to their written questions!

☹ *DO NOT SHARE THE CONTENTS OF STUDENTS' JOURNALS WITH ANYONE ELSE WITHOUT THEIR PERMISSION.* Word gets around, and you may find yourself in an extremely awkward position.

☺ Return the journals to the students as soon as possible.

ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS:

☺ Be alert to clues that troubled students may give in their writing. Younger students especially may be struggling with homesickness, depression, or other non-academic problems that can appear in their journals. Again, do NOT share that information with anyone else without their permission. You may respond in writing about available campus counseling services, but above all, respect the confidentiality of their writing! If you don't know what to do in an extreme case, consult with your course coordinator or some other departmental official ***before*** taking action.

☺ If many students are stuck, or if they get "stale" after a number of weeks of journal writing, you could have a contest for "The Grossest Story" or for "The Dumbest Thing I Ever Did" to liven things up. Instructors often will have students write about their reactions to or experiences with the chapter topic. This way, students have vocabulary available to them and they will possibly have had the opportunity to discuss that topic. These suggestions also tend to deter students from copying their own journals from previous courses.

☹ Giving them examples of your own personal/academic writing to model is irrelevant and inappropriate. It's ***their own writing*** that we want to encourage. It's best to just encourage students in their journals, making extensive and specific comments on the content and remarking on their growing ability to express themselves in writing.

☺ Having students exchange journals ("Journal Partners") can also be very effective for modeling what students can expect to be able to produce in a journal.

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IN-CLASS WRITING ACTIVITIES

I. WHOLE-CLASS COMPOSITIONS

LEVELS: ALL

OVERVIEW: This activity is designed to "sensitize" students to the process of writing by having them identify all the major components of an essay on many different topics in a short period of time. It is an excellent opportunity for students to express an idea in writing in just a sentence or two, and then often be called upon to explain and clarify. It is also an excellent collaborative activity since each pair is responsible for making their meaning clear to the other groups.

SET UP: Divide the students into pairs and have them form a circle. Instruct each pair to write their names on the top of a sheet of paper. Do not explain the entire activity to them ahead of time! It tends to short circuit any enthusiasm.

STEP ONE: Write a topic for an essay on the top of the sheet of paper. Write a sentence or two.

PASS THE PAPER TO THE PAIR TO YOUR LEFT/RIGHT EVERY TIME

STEP TWO: Narrow down the topic that you have in front of you. Be more specific.

PASS

STEP THREE: Indicate specifically for whom the essay will be written (e.g., another student, the varsity cheerleading squad, a Spanish-speaking visitor, etc.)

PASS

STEP FOUR: Indicate the specific purpose of the essay, based on the topic chosen (e.g., to sell, to convince, to inform, to criticize, etc.)

PASS

STEP FIVE: Write the first sentence of this essay (or Thesis Statement for more advanced students).

PASS

STEP SIX: Read the first sentence/Thesis Statement in front of you. Now write a better one.

PASS PAPER BACK TO THE ORIGINAL PAIR

CLASS DISCUSSION: How did your topic develop? Did it surprise you? Was your topic understood? How could you have been more clear?

VARIATIONS:

Topics could be suggested from the topic of the material currently being studied in class. The steps could be simplified or expanded, depending on the level of the learner.

II. Rx FOR WRITER'S BLOCK: "LA SESIÓN CRONOMETRADA"

LEVELS: Intermediate, Advanced

OVERVIEW: This is a very simple activity. The purpose is to get students pushing their pens, or tapping *teclas* if you're lucky enough to be teaching in a computer lab. I first experienced this activity while participating in a workshop for "dissertating graduate students on the verge of a nervous breakdown". It requires no preparation, but it does require explanation; it can bomb if students are not emotionally prepared for it. One great benefit is that it tends to help students see writing in a second language as similar to writing in their own language. Writer's block is universal.

PROCEDURE: Have an informal class discussion about what sitting down to write in their second language is like. Undoubtedly, the topic of writer's block will come up whether they know how to say the term or not. I have *never* had to bring the topic up!

STEP ONE: Explain that during 5 minutes, they are to write about [the class topic] without stopping, erasing, correcting, worrying about grammar, spelling, punctuation, or translation. If they don't know a word, make one up or write it in their first language.

STEP TWO: Start the clock. And get busy, because you're going to write too! Remember, think of your class as a workshop.

STEP THREE: Have volunteers share their feelings about the experience. It's usually time for a good laugh to release some stress.

STEP FOUR: Have them CIRCLE the sentence(s) they like best and either in pairs, in groups or as whole class discuss their work.

VARIATION FOR BEGINNERS: Have students make lists of words on certain topics. For example: "write down the names for all the Mexican dishes you can think of." You can do this like the game "Boggle", where afterwards, everyone compares their lists, and the person with the most original entries wins.

III. NOTE TAKING

This activity has real world applications. Students often find themselves in upper division language courses, never having taken notes in their second language beyond copying off the board during class time. They need practice taking notes while listening to class activities. The goal of this activity should NEVER be the grammatical accuracy of the notes they take. The issue is their ability to record simultaneously in their second language what they're hearing.

LEVELS: ALL

TYPE ONE: Integrated - have note taking be a part of another activity. (As mentioned earlier, writing needn't and shouldn't always be separated from other activities).

EXAMPLES:

Skits: Have students perform skits based on situations you given them. Have the other students take notes *on a specific aspect* of the presentations. Don't just say "take notes". They won't. You wouldn't either. Have the students take notes on: all the emotions expressed, the cultural aspects, a written description of the interaction, etc.

Visuals: For beginners, taking notes can be just writing down words. Using pictures, have them write all the colors, relationships, items, etc., they see. Especially with beginning learners, it's often better to refer to verbs as "action words" - "Write down all the words you can think of that describe the action in this picture". Just saying the word "verb" may kill the entire activity. Of course you want them to learn verbs - you just don't have to tell them up front! Producing a list of words while watching or looking at something is a very important foundational skill for them.

TYPE TWO: Explicit.

EXAMPLES:

Media sources: Have them take notes from a newspaper or magazine article, a recorded lecture, a television program, etc. For beginners, television commercials are great for their limited comprehension skills and attention span.

Oral presentations: When you have few resources available to you, you can do periodic lectures on contemporary issues. It's also great practice for you if you don't have many opportunities to speak in your second language about contemporary issues at length! You may give students an outline of your presentation beforehand or afterwards so they can SEE what you presented.

QUIZZES: To test their note taking skills, announce a quiz *several days or even weeks after* the presentation. In this way, they must rely upon their own notes to be able to prepare.

IV. PENPALS

Writing in a second language can take on much more meaning and depth when corresponding with a native speaker of that language. Computers connected to electronic mail networks available at many institutions offer an easy way to communicate with other electronic mail users all over the world (see the *Hispania* section on "Computers for professional applications" *75*(2): p. 456 for guidelines).

V. JOURNAL PARTNERS

Having students exchange journals rather than handing them in to you offers them a unique and valuable opportunity - they engage in real written communication with their peers. They are responsible for reading and responding to the information that their journal partner writes to them about. They are also responsible for following the same guidelines presented in the "To the Instructor" section (see p. 7).

LEVELS: ALL

PROCEDURE: You can manage this activity fairly easily. You should not have much work left to do outside of the classroom!

1. Assign journal partners - usually done in pairs.
2. All students hand their journals in on the assigned day.
3. Have them begin another activity. While they are working, you can go through the journals quickly and record in your grade book those students who turned in journals.
4. At the end of the class session, hand the journals to the students' assigned journal partners.
5. The journal partners must read and respond in writing, and then return the journals to you in a day or two.
6. Collect the journals again, and give credit for the quality/quantity of the journal partners' responses. You may want to do this outside of class, but it can be accomplished fairly quickly since you are only reading and determining if the task was done satisfactorily.

VI. QUESTIONNAIRES

(Based in part on Hedge, T. (1988). "Using questionnaires." *Writing* (pp. 41-42). New York: Oxford Univ. Press.)

Questionnaires are very effective tools for motivating students with content, especially when the questionnaires are designed with controversial statements. They provoke reactions from students which can in turn be excellent points of departure into oral and written activities. Questionnaires can be used often since they can be adapted to any topic and for all levels of second language learners.

LEVELS: All

PREPARING THE QUESTIONNAIRE:

This is an excellent writing activity. Do not take this burden upon yourself - let your students do it. Having students prepare the questionnaire accomplishes several goals:

1) helps you determine whether they have prepared and understood the materials for the lesson,
2) helps you determine what aspects of the topic they think are relevant,
3) establishes an immediate and real need for new vocabulary and grammar items, and
4) gives the students responsibility and a degree of control, making the classroom a "safer" place for writing to occur.

TYPES OF QUESTIONS:

1. *Check the box.* These are the easiest to fill out and it is simple to tabulate the results, but the most difficult to prepare, as the questions must be specific and detailed. Best if used by intermediate students preparing the questionnaire for beginners.

   ¿Te gusta jugar al fútbol?

_	_	_
sí	a veces	no

2. *Fill in correct data.* Only slightly more difficult to complete, this questionnaire allows for a greater variety of data to be collected from those students with minimal language skills.

   ¿Cuál es tu color favorito? _____

3. *Open answer.* This type of questionnaire can elicit the most interesting information from the informants. They are fairly easy to prepare, but rather time-consuming to complete, and it can be difficult to make generalizations based on responses.

   ¿Cómo eras cuando tenías 10 años? ¿15?

MODIFYING ACTIVITIES TO INCLUDE A WRITING COMPONENT

"TELEPHONE": Tried and true, this is a traditional parlor game. A message is whispered from one person to the next. The last person tells everyone what s/he heard, and everyone gets a big laugh from how the story changed.

WRITE --> Have students write down what they heard immediately *after* they have whispered the story to the next student.

"AMNESIA": Everyone gets a sign taped to their back identifying them as a famous person. Everyone wanders around the class trying to determine who they are by means of asking questions that are answered by only "sí" or "no".

WRITE --> After everyone has figured out who they are, have each student write a brief synopsis of that person's life.

"GRAB BAG": You reach into a bag and describe what's inside (a mixture of Jell-o and marbles, stuffed animals or cooked pasta are my favorites).

WRITE --> Have each student write down all the words they can think of to describe how the contents of the bag felt - after they've wiped the Jell-o off their hands.

"THE RONCO WIDGET": Bring a suitcase full of utensils and tools you can find around the house. After going over the names for everything, have students work together grouping them according to where and how they're used, putting them in alphabetical order, separating them by who tends to use them most, etc.

WRITE --> Have pairs of students design and explain all the possible uses of the "ultimate household utensil".

GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS FOR WRITING ACTIVITIES

(Based in part on Oller, John W. Jr. (1983). "Story Writing Principles and ESL Teaching," *TESOL Quarterly, 17*(1); 39-53.)

☞ **It's better that *any* language arts activity be too easy than too hard** - it's easier to make an activity in-progress more challenging than to make it more simple. Students who are frustrated tend to shut down quickly. Also there should be no reason for using English. Explaining directions in Spanish/Portuguese is an *excellent* listening activity!

☞ **Writing activities should be motivated by plans and goals.** Attention and intelligence are guided by the plans and goals that make the activity meaningful. A writing activity that is used just to "kill time" and that is not motivated by the overall and/or immediate goals of the course will not hold the students' attention or engage them in intelligent participation.

☞ **Respect logic and causality.** Students' expectations in the language classroom are based on their life experiences. Materials presented should be factual and logical. To help insure comprehensibility of utterances or texts, use material that is true or that is at least believable fiction. Design activities which possess their own natural logic and therefore provide a meaningful basis for communication. For example, when preparing situations for skits, it's often better to have the student just be a student rather than a *matador* or brain surgeon. It's much more realistic, meaningful and fun.

☞ **Use the element of surprise in writing activities to motivate learning.** Use of the unexpected can keep a classroom very lively and can help motivate students to write. "Shock value" also has merit in this context, I'm sure, but then there is the potential of material that is "shocking" being offensive and questionable for general classroom application. Use "shocking" material judiciously.

☞ **Do not ask students to comprehend or produce nonsense.** All writing activities must include and promote meaningful communication in order to promote improvement of composing abilities.

☞ **Analyze language arts activities from several angles.** Often, many excellent writing activities are not processed to their full potential. Students are often primed and ready to talk and write about an activity after working through it, but no follow-up is attempted.

SHORT ESSAYS

As soon as possible (I'd say several weeks into first semester of language study), students should begin to have the experience writing passages longer than a sentence or two **in class**. The following essay question was given to 3rd semester students while working through a chapter on careers. Read the following essay, marking it as you would for one of your students. Note that the question is asking about the student's interests and goals - it is not a hypothetical situation.

PREGUNTA: Dónde te gustaría trabajar después de graduarte? Describe una empresa ideal o una empresa que te interese. (An original, unedited student reponse follows)

Me gustaría trabajar en una compania de insurencia a una Actuary depués de graduarme. Una empresa ideal es despejado, claro, inteligente, y comprensivo. Trabajo a una Actuary para la compania y trabajo con statisticas y estimar los premios, preferialmente en Chicago. La compania es muy grande, por ejemplo Allstate o State Farm. La gerencia es muy orgullo de los Actuarios. El presidents no trabaja mucho con los actuarios porque usualmente el presidente no entiendo el trabajo de ellos, él solamente conta con la informacion de ellos. La gerencia se lleva bien con los empleados y los empleados no tienen un sindicato.

Now, evaluate this essay in the way that YOU would normally do it for one of your students. Do not turn the page until you have finished evaluating the essay.

MAJOR PRINCIPLES FOR TESTING WRITING:

(Source: Paulson, D. L. (forthcoming). "Assessing FL Writing Ability." *Hispania.*)

1) There should be plenty of opportunities for students to practice the type of writing that you expect them to do on any writing test.

2) Assessment of writing should reflect the goal of the test - errors of accentuation, spelling, and syntax must be kept in perspective with the overall purpose of the test.

3) It is important to test a variety of writing skills and to have items of varying lengths.

4) Plan tests to be shorter and more frequent.

5) Writing evaluation checklists or profiles help protect the student against a biased or less-experienced teacher/evaluator and help the teacher explain her/his reasons for the evaluation. Another important consideration is that these evaluation profiles tend to systematize an otherwise nebulous and frustrating grading procedure and make it go more quickly.

But, when is writing *composing*?

(Based on Kaplan, R. B. (1983). "An Introduction to the Study of Written Texts." In R. B. Kaplan (Ed.), *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics.* Rowley, MA: Newbury House Publishers)

WRITING WITHOUT COMPOSING

1. filling in blanks
2. writing "short answers"
3. writing lists
4. doing "word problems" (e.g., answering math problems that contain both numbers and words)
5. transcribing

WRITING THROUGH COMPOSING

1. Writing for informational purposes
   a. note-taking and outlining
   b. writing reports and analyses
2. Writing for personal purposes
   a. diaries (writing intended for one's self only)
   b. dialogue journals, personal letters, notes, memos, e-mail (writing intended for maintaining personal contact)
3. Writing for imaginative purposes
   a. fiction (writing intended to amuse, teach, entertain, and convey something other than information)
   b. poems (writing intended to convey feeling and emotion)

EVALUATING WRITING
GRADING CRITERIA FOR COMPOSITIONS

STANDARD CRITERIA FOR BEGINNING LANGUAGE COURSES
VERSION 1

COMPREHENSIBILITY	Most is incomprehensible	1 2 3
	Generally comprehensible, but needs interpretation	4 5 6
	Completely comprehensible	7 8 9
COHESIVENESS	Composition is a series of separate sentences with no transitions	1 2
	Composition is choppy or disjointed	3 4
	Composition flows smoothly and has some style	5 6 7
INFO CONVEYED	Minimal information given	1 2
	Info adequate for topic	3 4
	Very complete info given	5 6 7
VOCABULARY	Inadequate/repetitious/ inaccurate/erroneous	1 2
	Adequate, but contains many errors	3 4
	Quite broad in range, precise and expressive	5 6 7
		____/30

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SAMPLE CRITERIA FOR A COLLEGE-LEVEL COMPOSITION COURSE

Puntos centrales:

I. La validez y la claridad de la idea central ("main point") del ensayo
II. El enfoque; la delimitación del tema

Criterios:

I. A. ¿Tiene el trabajo una idea central válida, expresada claramente en una o dos frases?

Sí: Seguir a B.
No: Hay que establecer antes de proceder cuál es la idea central del ensayo.

B. ¿Está expresada explícitmente esta idea central al final de la introducción o sección preliminar?

Sí: Seguir a E.
No: Seguir a C.

C. ¿Está expresada explícitamente esta idea central al final del ensayo?

Sí: Seguir a D.
No: O el trabajo no tiene idea central, o está metida al medio del ensayo. En cualquier de los casos, hay que expresar una idea central en el lugar apropiado.

D. Si el punto central está expresada explícitamente al final del ensayo, ¿también tiene el ensayo puesto, al final de la introducción, un "punto preliminar" que capte el interés del lector y que le impulse a seguir leyendo?

Sí: Seguir a E.
No: Hay que revisar el final de la introducción para que exprese un "punto preliminar". Este "punto preliminar" puede plantear una pregunta, expresar una meta, hacer una observación clave, o en alguna otra forma anticipada para el lector las ideas que siguen.

continued on next page-->

E. ¿Es válida y relevante la idea central del ensayo? Nota: Para determinar la validez de la idea central, hay que determinar para quién está escrito el ensayo (quién es el lector anticipado) y cuál es el propósito del ensayo (qué intenta lograr el autor). La idea central es válida y relevante si cumple bien el próposito, y si toma bien en cuenta las necesidades del lector anticipado.

Sí: Seguir a parte II.
No: El ensayo necesita una nueva idea central.

II. ¿Desarrolla bien el ensayo los temas y conceptos mencionados al final de la introducción?

A. Generalmente aparecen 2-3 veces por página las "palabras temáticas" mencionadas al final de la introducción.

Sí: Seguir a B.
No: Hay que revisar el ensayo para poder mencionar, de una manera natural, las "palabras temáticas" más frecuentemente.

B. ¿Tienen una relación natural y lógica las ideas expresadas en cada párrafo con la idea central, tal como la expresan las "palabras temáticas" y las oraciones temáticas?

Sí: Ha cumplido con los criterios.
No: Hay que revisar el ensayo para que las ideas expresadas se vinculen más estrechamente con la idea central del ensayo.

Evaluación:

Versión 1 - Puntos centrales:

_____ x .90 = _____ / 90%

Versión 2 - Forma {gramática, vocabulario, estilo}:

_____ x .10 = _____ / 10%

NOTA TOTAL

Puntos centrales _____ + Forma _____ = _____ %

Gran parte de la elaboración de los criterios esbozados arriba se debe al Prof. Gregory Colomb (Business & Technical Writing), "A checklist for marking/revising term papers and reports," unpublished ms. University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

INDIVIDUAL CONFERENCES

Of all the activities in this workshop, this one is probably one of the more logistically problematic, yet students report that this is one of the more helpful activities you can do to help them with their writing. If you're a high school teacher, you cannot leave the classroom. If you have a large number of students, you don't have much time to talk to them individually. If you're in grad school, you probably did not sleep the night before, so...

- Plan to dedicate a couple days to these conferences, and let the students know in advance.
- Plan the conferences to occur while they are involved in a written project - if there is no chance for future revision, the conference has little value.
- Plan to have students turn in a draft BEFORE the conference so the whole time isn't spent having them explain what they're writing about.
- If it's a group project, meet with the group. If it's an individual project, meet with the individual.
- Have students plan a list of questions to ask about their papers. Most students will just sit and stare at you and expect you to correct all their mistakes if they are not prepared with questions.
- Plan to discuss the points on the evaluation profile sheet (if you've used one) in detail. This may be the only opportunity they have to hear you talk in detail about what the different points mean to YOU.
- Have them take notes of the discussion. *"In one ear, out the other..."*
- Take notes of the conference yourself so you can determine if your suggestions were actually followed.
- Since these conferences occur outside of the classroom, this is one instance when I speak in English if the student prefers. You can cover a lot of territory much faster. Save the listening comprehension benefits for the classroom.

ANNOTATED REFERENCES

Arapoff Cramer, N. (1985). *The Writing Process: 20 Projects for Group Work*. Rowley, MA: Newbury House.

Good for use as a reference, though it would be very problematic for classroom use - the format is interesting but very repetitive.

Hedge, T. (1988). *Writing*. NY: Oxford Univ. Press.

Excellent resource book loaded with great writing activities for all levels.

Hughey, J. B., Wormuth, D. R., Hartfiel, V. F., & Jacobs, H. L. (1983). *Teaching ESL Composition: Principles and Techniques*. Cambridge: Newbury House Publishers.

A volume on theory and practice for the second language composition instructor.

Krashen, S. (1984). *Writing: Research, Theory, and Applications*. New York: Pergamon Press.

An overview of his theory of how writing fits into the communicative classroom.

Lee, J. F. & Paulson, D. L. (1992). "Writing and Compositions." In B. VanPatten *et al.* (Ed.), *Instructor's Manual: ¿Sabías que...?* New York: McGraw-Hill.

A *how-to* reference for including writing activities in beginning language curricula.

Paulson, D. L. (forthcoming). "Assessment of FL Learners' Writing Ability." *Hispania*.

Step-by-step theory and practice of evaluating second language writing

Raimes, A. (1983). *Techniques in teaching writing*. NY: Oxford Univ. Press.

A very approachable and simple work. A good primer on teaching writing for new teachers.

VanPatten, B., Lee, J. F., Ballman, T. L., & Dvorak, T. (1992). *¿Sabías que...? Beginning Spanish* (Textbook, workbooks, Instructor's Manual). New York: McGraw-Hill.

A new beginning Spanish series that offers a task-based approach to teaching, loaded with writing activities.

VanPatten, B., Marks, M. A., & Teschner, R. V. (1992). *Destinos - An Introduction to Spanish* (Textbook, workbooks, videotapes, audio cassettes, software). NewYork: McGraw-Hill.

Materials that accompany television series to appear Fall 1992 on many PBS stations.